

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MOGADI 01654 221457Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----031795 221502Z /14
O P 221325Z JUL 78 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 0000
INFO AMEMBASSY ROME NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY AIDDA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

S E C R E T MOGADISCIO 1654

EXDIS
E.O..11652 XGDS -2

TAGS: PBOR, MASS, ET, SO, SA

ROME FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE

REF: ADDIS ABABA 3213

1. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT ANY STEPS AMBASSADOR CHAPIN MIGHT BE AUTHORIZED TO TAKE IN ORDER TO CONSTRAIN POSSIBLE ETHIOPIAN RETALIATORY ATTACKS ON TARGETS IN SOMALIA WOULD BE WELCOME. OUR LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR HAVING THE MOGADISCIO AIRPORT AS A POSSIBLE TARGET ASIDE, WE CAN ONLY SEE ADVERSE RESULTS FROM A CONTINUATION OF A PROCESS OF INCIDENT AND RETALIATORY INCIDENT WHICH COULD ESCALATE TO THE RETURN OF CONVENTIONAL WARFARE ON THE PRESENT BORDERS OF SOMALIA AND ETHIOPIA.

2. ON THE OTHER HAND EMBASSY MUST QUESTION THE WISDOM OF INTRODUCING THE VISIT OF THE US MILITARY SURVEY TEAM AS A POSSIBLE SANCTION SHOULD THERE BE AN ETHIOPIAN RETALIATORY ACTION. WE BELIEVE THIS INFLATES THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TEAM VISIT ALL OUT OF PROPORTION TO ITS ANNOUNCED PURPOSES. MOREOVER, THE ETHIOPIANS COULD NOT BE FAULTED BY CONCLUDING THAT THE COROLARY HOLDS TRUE:

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SO LONG AS ETHIOPIA REFRAINS FROM ACTION AGAINST SOMALIA THERE WOULD BE NO TEAM VISIT. THE VISIT, AFTER ALL, WAS A USG INITIATIVE, NOT A SOMALI IDEA. THE SOMALIS HAVE ALSO INDICATED THAT THE TEAM ITSELF MAY LOOK INTO THE MATTER OF SOMALI SUPPORT FOR THE INSURGENTS IN THE OGADEN. WE BELIEVE THIS IS LIKELY A SHAM, BUT WE THINK IT IS ONE OF THE ITEMS WHICH SHOULD BE ON THE TEAM'S AGENDA. WE HAVE HAD SO FEW OPPORTUNITIES TO TAKE A FIRST HAND LOOK AT THE

MILITARY SITUATION IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD THAT IT SEEMS
WE OUGHT PURSUE VIGOROUSLY THOSE CHANCES THAT PRESENT
THEMSELVES.

3. IN SUMMARY EMBASSY BELIEVES THE DECISION TO SEND THE MILITARY
SURVEY TEAM TO SOMALIA SHOULD BE BASED ON WHETHER
OR NOT THAT STEP IS IN THE US INTEREST. WE HAVE ARGUED
THAT THIS STEP CAN HELP CONSTRAIN THE SOMALIS ABD MAY GIVE SIAD
ENOUGH PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT TO EFFECTIVELY TIGHTEN THE REINS
ON THE INSURGENTS AS WELL AS UNDERGIRD HIS POSITION VIS A VIS
HIS MORE RADICAL DOMESTIC CRITICS. WE HAVE NEVER SEEN THE DECISION
AS AN EASY ONE OR A STEP THAT WILL BE TAKEN WITHOUT COSTS. WE DO
NOT THINK THE DECISION OUGHT BE LINKED WITH ETHIOPIAN ACTIONS OR
ARGUMENTS THAT SUCH A STEP CONSTITUTES REWARDING AGGRESSION. WHO
IS OR IS NOT THE AGGRESSOR IN THIS BENIGHTED PART OF THE WORLD
IS DETERMINED BY WHICH PORTAL THE OBSERVER HAS ENTERED THE CHURCH.
VOUGHT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NEGOTIATIONS, BORDER INCIDENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MOGADI01654
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780302-0162
Format: TEL
From: MOGADISCIO
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780730/aaaaazfg.tel
Line Count: 80
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 55a18a6e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: 78 ADDIS ABABA 3213
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1917589
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: APPROACH TO ETHIOPIAN ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER CONCERNING POSSIBLE ETHIOPIAN RETALIATION FOR CONTINUED SOMALI INSURGENCY IN THE OGADEN
TAGS: PBOR, MASS, ET, SO, SA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/55a18a6e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014